





WAKE UP AMERICA!



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WAKE UP AMERICA!

BY
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I

THE war did not come to us as it came to Belgium. No Oregon rancher, working in his field on a peaceful afternoon, was disturbed by an odd whirring in the sunny air, and looked toward Mount Hood to see an airplane spitting fire upon his neighbouring village. In no New England town did children huddle in the windows and peer at exultant Uhlans prancing down the maple-shaded street. No Maryland farmer from his hilltop field saw a thing that sent him hurrying to the house to gather his children into his cart and take to the

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road in fear. No city of ours walked for days in anxiety, listening to the rise and fall of a fateful cannonade. War did not thunder at our doors as at the forts of Liège.

II

OF the way that war came to Belgium and to France there are two pictures which, among American witnesses, surpass all others and are unforgettable. One is in the letters home of an American woman, Miss Mildred Aldrich, who in June preceding the war had gone to a village in rural France for rest. It is part of the irony of the times that in her first letter, written six weeks before the war began, she should have said: "I have come to feel the need of calm and quiet—perfect peace."

Among the simple, friendly farmers she found the gentle serenity that she sought. She lived alone in her cottage, and used to smile at herself for

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keeping up her American precaution of fastening the doors and windows when she went to bed at night. But one day the *garde champêtre* with his drum walked up the country street, stopping at each crossroad to beat the long roll—"A chill ran down my spine," she wrote. Then she began to notice the airplanes hurrying from Paris to the front, and at night the nearby railway rumbled with the troop trains going by. Presently, war rolled right up to her peaceful door-step, a little band of tired and harried soldiers who said quite simply: "We are all that is left of the North Irish Horse."

The other American, Brand Whitlock, was Heaven-sent to Belgium. Not for his administrative accomplishments as our ambassador; that might well have been done as capably by another. But if a survey had been made

of all the professional writers in America, if the acutest intelligence had been exerted to find that one writer with the talent and the personality to picture how the greatest tragedy in history blasted its way across the peaceful sunshine of August in Belgium, Brand Whitlock might well have been chosen. He had the sensitiveness to see and the skill to make vivid.

“Lovely Brussels,” he wrote, “was lovelier than ever, but somehow with a wistful, waning loveliness infinitely pathetic. All over the Quartier Leopold the white façades of the houses bloomed with flags, their black and red and yellow colours transparent in the sunlight; in the Forêt the sunlight filtered through the leaves, irradiating the green boles of the trees, and through the hazy sunlight that lay on the fields

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the mound of Waterloo was outlined against the sky. In the Bois, in the midst of woodland peace, the children were playing and lovers whispered still their marvellous discoveries. Who . . . can think of those days . . . without the memory of that wonderful sunlight which filled them to the brim? Day after day went by, with each new morning the miracle was renewed."

And then:

"The crash of the music of a military band, high, shrill with the fierce, screaming notes, the horrid clang of mammoth brass cymbals, not music, but noise of a calculated savagery, to strike terror. The Prussian officers with cruel faces scarred by dueling. Some of the heavier type with rolls of fat, the mark of the beast, as Emerson calls it, at the back of the neck, and red, heavy, brutal faces

looking about over the heads of the silent, awed, saddened crowd, with arrogant, insolent, contemptuous faces! The heavy guns that lurched by, their mouths of steel lowered toward the ground. It became terrible, oppressive, unendurable, monstrous, those black guns on grey carriages; those field-grey uniforms, the insolent faces of those supercilious young officers; those dull plodding soldiers, those thews and sinews, the heels of those clumsy boots drumming on the pavements."

III

NOT like that did war come to us. It did not assault our eyes, our ears, our nostrils (some day get Will Irwin to tell you of the *smell* of war). It did not come to us as a thing spurt-
ing blood and belching thunder. To us war came rather as something on paper, as a thing of documents, and statutes and refinements of international law, a thing of whereases and therefore. Moreover, the quibbling, the note writing, the refining of verbal distinctions, had been going on for more than two years.

And war having come to us in this way, there was not in it the quality to stir our emotions. "Flag-decked City is Calm," said the headline in the New

York *Times* on the day that President Wilson read his message. And the bloodiest thing that happened to us in connection with the war that day was recorded in headlines of the same size: "Senator Lodge Knocks Down a Pacifist."

IV

AND, since the war came to us in that way, the question was, and at the end of a year still is, have we the imagination and that sympathy which in sensitive peoples can take the place of eyes and ears? Can we know war vicariously, through feeling for the Belgians and the French? Have we *now* the emotion of war? Are we really at war in our hearts? Have we felt

“That leap of heart whereby a people rise
Up to a noble anger’s height?”

Have we had the thing that is necessary to “stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage?” That is part of

what is meant when people talk of a nation's "morale." Germany thinks we have not got it, and there are those among the subtle who believe that Germany has conducted herself during the past years with an eye to refraining from anything that would give us this lofty anger. For the theory is that without this emotion a nation can not fight with the energy that alone can make effective war.

War, after all, when you get down to its essence, is sticking a bayonet into another man's stomach—and pulling it out and sticking it in again. It is the second thrust that is important; *that* can only be inspired by high anger. It is not a thing that a man can do except in emotion. It is against all reason. It is against every moral instinct. It is contrary to all the habits of our ordered lives. It cannot be done in cold blood. One

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wonders if it can be done with the hands, while with the lips you talk peace.

It is recognized that for war every nation needs this emotion. The excitement that supplies it comes sometimes one way, sometimes another. In the Civil War, the excitant was supplied by the firing on the American flag. The people had endured the secession of six States; they had endured the formal organization of the Confederate Government; they had endured the adoption by that Government of a permanent Constitution. But there was still wanting the thing that would make the nation flame. That want was supplied by the firing on the flag at Fort Sumter. J. G. Holland's "Life of Lincoln" expresses it:

"The North needed just this. Such a universal burst of patriotic indignation as ran over the North under the

influence of this insult to the National flag has never been witnessed. It swept away all party lines as if it had been flame and they had been wax."

Once during this war we had the excitant. Once we had the beginnings of the emotion. Once we felt in our hearts that rising flame which burns out self and fuses the individual into the nation. That was the morning after the *Lusitania* was sunk, when the German nation was revealed to us as something different from the German friends we knew, as something else than our smiling, good-natured, sentimental friend of the beer garden and the Strauss waltzes; when we learned that the German had surrendered his will and his conscience and his soul, and put them at the disposal of the cruel will of a pagan autocracy. The German, under the

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yoke and spell of that brutal will, was revealed to us as a man who murders women and children, and then exults over it. And they were *our* women and children, dependent on our protection, trustful of our will to avenge them. Perhaps as they went down they extracted a measure of noble serenity from the thought that their death would not be in vain, that we would avenge them and that through them Belgium would be avenged, too; that they were the sacrifice chosen by fate to rouse this easy-going giant of the West. And we were aroused: Our blood did rise to the call.

On that sunny morning in May, 1915, the tamest and lamest of us would have shouldered a rifle. But President Wilson thought that negotiation was better. He threw water on the rising flame. Since the *Lusi-*

tania, now within a few weeks of three years ago, was sunk there has not been any time when this nation has had the feeling of war, the thing that puts punch behind the bayonet. Not yet.

V

ENGLAND'S first year of the war was completed a long time ago, on August 4, 1915. But what a different first year it was from ours! On that first anniversary England held a solemn service in St. Paul's Cathedral. Solemn it well might be. She numbered her dead in hundreds of thousands. Week after week the lists had come back, a thousand, three thousand, five thousand. The wounded, the wreckage of war, thrust themselves on England's eyes in every street and country road. The enemy had been literally at her throat. He had been on her soil. England had been in the fire. She had passed through Mons and Ypres and the sec-

ond Ypres. She had seen new forms of death, ingenious, monstrous. She had tasted horrors—as we have not.

For although we have been formally in the war for exactly a year at the time this is written, we have not yet come to dread the day that brings the week's casualty list, nor learned to cover with silence the fresh draft on our fortitude. When we pick the day's paper up, we have not had the occasion to cover grief with serenity, as a duty to our neighbour with a similar grief. Our wounded have not come limping back to our doorsteps. Our sons have not come home to us in winding sheets.

In describing that solemn anniversary service in St. Paul's, and summing up the first year of the war, the London *Times* was able to say of the English people:

“They have borne the ordeal in a

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fashion to which their children may look back with thankfulness and pride. The ordeal has been the hardest they could have been called upon to undergo . . . They have made unprecedented sacrifices of treasure and blood, they have endured many vicissitudes and suffered many disappointments. After all their losses and their efforts, the end is still remote. They know it, and with one accord they face the situation with a rising courage and a gathering resolve. Nowhere is there a whisper of doubt, of a shadow of irresolution.”

And right there is the difference. We have reached the end of *our* first year of war. And—it is said not in any spirit of self-reproach but as a simple record of fact—we have nothing yet to which “*our* children may look back with thankfulness and pride.” We have had no ordeal; we

have not been touched by the fire. The flower and fruit of war is sacrifice, and we have made no sacrifice. The spiritual gain of war is sacrifice, and we have gained nothing. We have reaped nothing.

But all in good time.

VI

THE people of the United States, during the early weeks of the present year, had what might be described accurately as their first shock of war. It was not much of a shock. The people awoke one morning to be confronted with an order from their Government commanding them to close down some of their shops and some of their places of amusement for a half a dozen days, more or less. They got very much excited about that. Indeed, I know few things so little to our national credit as the chorus of angry irritation which swept over the land because of that casual inconvenience to our settled ways. To be sure, the

order was awkwardly conceived in some of its details, and was put into execution somewhat precipitately. But it was neither as awkward nor as precipitate as shells dropping into your front yard, or a hostile army marching down your principal street. In all the angry outburst I can recall but one newspaper, the New York *Globe*, among those I happened to read, that took the other note, reminding its readers that after all we are at war, and I shall always think with pleasure of that one Southern Governor who, when a New York newspaper was soliciting statements for an organized campaign of denunciation, replied that he did not have access to as many of the facts as Dr. Garfield had, and that in the absence of such knowledge, he chose to assume that the order was justified by some exigency of a nation engaged in war.

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There could be no surer sign that psychologically we are not yet at war than the spirit in which we received that first mild shock, and it did not bode well for our national morale when, ultimately, war calls upon us for real emergencies and sacrifices of the kind that our Allies have come to take as a matter of course. One wonders just how deep our stores of fortitude will turn out to be.

That first shock last winter was but a premonitory tremor compared to the shocks that are certain to come upon us during the next few months.

We thought of that recent shock in terms of coal, partly because it came from Dr. Garfield, and partly because Dr. Garfield, not fully understanding it himself, phrased it in terms of coal. In reality it was not a crisis of coal, but a crisis of ships. If the events which led up to the order were set

down in sequence, they would read like this:

England cabled us a call for supplies so urgent in its need that any expedient was justifiable; the ships to carry these supplies were in American harbours unable to sail; they were unable to sail because they had not been coaled. And the reason they had not been coaled was not the lack of coal. The coal was there—but the docks and terminals were so congested with every sort of supplies that it was impossible to get the coal from the sidings on to the ships. Dr. Garfield's closing of factories was designed primarily, not to save coal, but to prevent the further accumulation and congestion of goods which *there were no ships to carry*. Now if in February this lack of ships is an inconvenience, in July it is going to be a calamity.

VII

THE American people have got to visualize this problem. They have got to put their imaginations on it until they realize it, and carry it about with them as the most important fact of their lives. They must see on one side of the Atlantic Ocean their new-born army; they must see on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean the food and supplies to keep that army alive. And they must understand that the only thing that joins the two is a thin and fragile line three thousand miles long. There are many dramatic aspects to this war, but I know of none so appealing as this frail line (which to most of us is merely a series of dots upon a map), made up of ex-

ceedingly perishable ships, all too few in number at best, only about one to every two or three miles—and every few hours one of them feels the dreaded shudder, topples and is swallowed up.

This picture is drawn to simplify essential truth. It is not overdramatic. That line is the umbilical cord of our little army, and the submarine is gnawing at it every hour of the day. More than that, it is the alimentary canal for a large part of the Allied armies, of the Belgian people, and of the sorely pressed women and children of England, France and Italy. Every rifle made in America is of no avail unless it passes successfully from end to end of that long, thin line. Every shell, every gun, every pound of meat, every grain of wheat, every airplane, the work of every factory in the country, every village making Red Cross

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bandages, every mother writing a letter to her soldier son, is dependent upon the maintenance of that line, *and it is not being maintained.*

“Not being maintained” is an abstraction. The casual reader may hurry over it without really taking it in. But we all must pause upon it until we do take it in. We must brood upon it. We must force our imaginations to grapple with this statement, until we can visualize it, until we understand what it means in terms of life and death. Every mother must see her son at the head of a trench, in that ultimate contest of hand and will, to which war sooner or later comes. She must see him alone, fighting for life, for *his* personal life, pouring out his bullets and his strength as he must; she must see him at the first moment when it comes upon him that his bullets and his

strength are running low; she must see him in a second of respite turning his head to see if help is coming, if more bullets are being brought to him, if a comrade is hurrying to his support; she must see that quick backward look again and again, until at last there is despair in it. She must know that if help does not come it is because there was not at that spot the quantity that we call *enough*, that quantity than which one bullet less is failure. And if there is not enough, it is because of one thing: the bullets were at the factory in abundant plenty, the soldiers were called and trained and ready in the cantonments; but somewhere in that long thin line, from the lone outpost on the battle front, back to the bullets factory in Pennsylvania, the weakest link had failed. And our weakest link is ships.

VIII

“THE secret of war is the secret of *communications*.”—NAPOLEON.

“The direction of military affairs is not half of the work of a general; to establish and guard the *communications* is more important.”—NAPOLEON.

“Any organization intended to maintain the efficiency of armies in the field must depend on *communications* with home being properly maintained.” — VON SCHELLENDORFF: “The Duties of the General Staff.”

“The best system of *communications* is powerless if there is no transport.” — FURSE: “Lines of Communication in War.”

“It is an axiom that no army in the field can exist for a long time in an efficient condition unless it has safe *communications* with its base.”—FURSE: “Lines of Communication in War.”

“The lines of *communication* . . . are to be considered as so many great vital arteries.”—CLAUSEWITZ.

“The attacker should deprive the enemy of his *communications* without abandoning his own.”—JOMINI.

“Special protection is, in addition, required for the lines of *communications* of the army, by which all the necessities of life are brought up to it.”—VON DER GOLTZ: “The Conduct of War.”

“The main roads in rear of an advancing army should never be allowed to become empty. . . . The boldest

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and best plan will lead to ultimate failure, if the available resources do not hold out until we have successfully gained the final objective, the attainment of which ensures peace.”—
CLAUSEWITZ.

“The defender will often have to abandon advantageous positions merely for the purpose of securing his lines of *communication*.”—VON DER GOLTZ: “The Conduct of War.”

“The lines of *communication* should be made secure before everything.”—
VON DER GOLTZ: “The Conduct of War.”

“Further than this only general ideas can be drawn up for future action. As a rule, they will direct attention to separating the enemy from his most important *communications*, without which the further existence of

his forces is imperilled. This is the easiest method of destroying the enemy in the sense in which we use the term in military language.”—VON DER GOLTZ: “The Conduct of War.”

IX

THE British Admiralty tells us once a week through the newspapers that the submarines have sunk ten ships, or eight ships, or twenty ships “of over 1,600 tons”—that is their phrase and in a way it has lulled us to sleep. The layman neglects the word “over”; in his mind he hastily multiplies 1,600 by ten, or even twenty; he thinks that doesn’t sound very serious, and turns to the sporting page. But what the British Admiralty knows, and what our Shipping Board knows, and what every practical shipping man knows, is that “over 1,600 tons” really means over 5,000 tons. Get that formula: *over 1,600 tons means 5,000 tons*. And the British

Admiralty knows, and our Shipping Board knows, that during a week when twenty ships "of over 1,600 tons" are reported, the actual tonnage sunk by the submarines, including smaller ships and French ships and American ships and neutral ships, is about 150,000. And they know further that *during the same week the amount of new shipping built by all the yards in all the Allied world was less than half the amount sunk by submarines.* And they know further, as well as any man can know anything about the future, that *the balance in favour of the submarine is going to be maintained for an indefinite time to come.*

I say "an indefinite time to come." And it is literally that. Of course, *if* the war continues into 1919, and *if* we are given time to get our shipbuilding under way—the everlastingly long

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time that our inefficiency demands—and *if* the Germans don't increase their submarine building as fast as we increase our shipbuilding, the time will come when we *may* reduce this appalling proportion in the submarine's favour. But that time is in the indefinite future. The official promisers *hope* that by the end of this year we shall have reduced the proportion to only 4 to 3 in the submarine's favour. But imagine that proportion as the expression of a hope!

X

IT is true we *may* increase our new construction. But when you put the word “may” before your verb, you are dealing in hope, luck, and blue sky. You can plan, you can “lay down a program,” as they say; you can promise and get promises in return—but you cannot be sure. You cannot foresee how accidents, or blind fate, or the forces of nature, may work against you.

The grim and ominous fact is that England, with all the desperation of her need, with all the warning she has had, with all the intelligence and energy which she has put into the effort to build more ships, is actually building fewer ships. Her output

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during the early months of 1918 is only from a half to three-quarters of her output during the late months of 1917. The explanation given is that the men are weary, that they have passed the high point of their capacity to do more even under pressure of great need; that their second wind has come and gone, that human nature can do no more. In this we get a hint of what is meant by the phrase "a war of exhaustion."

We, in America, are not weary, for we have not exerted ourselves. We *may* increase our new construction in time. But what I am willing to assert is that during the year 1918, now upon us, we shall not increase it to the necessary point. And what a cautious man will consider when he is in the world of "may" is what are the Germans likely to do in the way of increasing their submarines. On

this point, the one thing we know certainly is that they have already increased their speed and range. That fact is in the world of "is." I cannot see why they should not be able to increase the number of their submarines as fast as we increase the number of targets for them. It was just a little over a year ago that the Germans adopted their unrestricted submarine policy. Presumably, since they committed their fortunes to it, they have settled upon a policy of maximum submarine building. As it takes about a year for such a program of ship construction to get under way, we may assume that the German submarine builders are just now getting into their stride.

But let us stay out of the world of speculation. Let us get into the world of past and present. In the realm of known facts this is the un-

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escapable truth: *For every one ton of new ships built in 1917 by all the Allies and all the neutrals, the submarines sank more than two tons.* And that proportion continues up to the hour when these words are being written, late in March, 1918.

The facts are put thus in order to be simple and to arrive at a form of statement which can be readily understood and indisputably proved. Shipping tonnage is a complex subject, and this complexity is one of the conditions that have put a fog about it and kept the public from being aware of the coming crisis. When the British Admiralty speaks of tonnage, it means gross tons; when our Shipping Board speaks of tonnage, it means dead weight tons; and many commercial authorities and newspapers, when they speak of tonnage, mean yet other things, net tonnage, or measurement tonnage, or

displacement tonnage. These technicalities need not be explained here. What the reader is assured is this: that the tons which the submarines are sinking are the same kind of tons that the Allies and neutrals are building, and that *the record up to the present is more than two to one in favour of the submarine.*

XI

DURING 1917, the submarine destroyed 6,618,623 tons. During the same year, Great Britain's entire new building was but 1,163,474 tons. The next largest builder was ourselves; we turned out just about 1,000,000 tons. After these two, there are no countries that do enough ship-building to count in such totals as the submarine makes us deal in. All the other Allies, France, Italy, Japan, and in addition to them all the neutrals, Norway, Holland, Spain—all told, produced only 539,871.

Add together all that was done by all the Allied countries and all the neutral countries, all the world outside of Germany and Austria, and you

have but 2,703,345 tons. *And the submarines destroyed just two and a half times as many.*

But the case is really worse than that. It is only the *sinkings* that are reported. The public is not informed of the ships which the submarines have incapacitated, which are towed limping to port, and which often turn out to be a more or less total loss. Nor is any account taken of the ships which are put out of commission through the normal operation of accident or other misadventure. This source of loss is greater now than during peace times, for ships are badly manned; they run without lights, and in the emergencies of war they take big chances. Nor is any estimate given—it would be hard to make an estimate—of the loss of service due to the slowness of operation forced upon ships by guarding against the sub-

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marine, the waiting for convoys, the low speed entailed when every ship must wait upon the slowest in the convoy, the inability to use some ports, the congestion of others.

However, you grow desperate with trying to explain it with figures. What you feel like doing is to shout to Heaven that the submarine is beating the builders at the rate of two to one; that we are facing a crisis; that unless we Americans can now, this year, pull ourselves together and turn out as much tonnage in one month as we turned out in the whole year of 1917 the world will suffer a calamity that you hesitate to put in words.

XII

PEOPLE do not realize what a relatively frail thing and what a relatively small thing this tonnage is, the one institution upon which our civilization, at the moment, depends—the one thing that enables the nations to join hands with each other, the fragile thing upon which they rely for the comfort of communication, the stimulus and cheer of mutual help.

All the ocean-going ships now in the Atlantic Ocean could be floated side by side in a not very big harbour. Their total surface would not be as large as a country town or a large Western farm. And if a few submarines got at them, they would work irreparable havoc among them in half

an afternoon. All the available ships now remaining afloat in the Allied and neutral world do not aggregate more than about 30,000,000 tons. And the submarine is sinking just about a quarter of them this present year.

When you state it that way, you think of four years as the critical period. There is something just like this about the whole subject—something that tends to send your mind off on wrong trails into a false security. It is not when the last Allied ship is sunk that the crisis will come. Starvation does not wait on a nation until the last loaf of bread has been eaten. Starvation begins when the food supply falls a certain percentage, a not very large percentage, below normal. And the Allied shipping has long been below normal. As long ago as January 1, 1917, before we were in the war, before our army added to the

need, the British estimated that shipping had fallen more than 300 vessels below their normal requirements. And bear in mind that our entrance into the war does not help, but makes worse, the shortage of shipping.

At the present speed of operation, it takes a ton of shipping a year to carry one soldier to France—to carry one soldier just in his clothes without any supplies. To keep him supplied with food and rifles and ammunition and guns and shells and trucks and airplanes and locomotives and rails, takes an amount of shipping variously estimated at from four to ten tons. Call it six tons, and you will have light on some of the talk that we have heard and read about what we are going to do. It has been said in high quarters that we must send seven million soldiers. And so we ought, and, probably, ultimately must. But to talk

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about that in the present condition of our shipping is a grotesque joke. To send seven million soldiers and keep them supplied would take about twice as many ships as are now on all the oceans of the world. To send two million soldiers would consume the capacity of nearly half the ships afloat. And this would be in addition to present needs, which are already so great that a crisis is in sight.

After Secretary Baker's testimony before a Senate investigating committee early this year, the *Washington Times* ran a headline which read:

**BAKER DECLARES 1,500,000 WILL
BE IN FRANCE IN 1918.**

And the New York *Herald's* headline, equally positive and equally definite, gave the figure as "2,000,000." Now the fact is Secretary Baker did not say that. He didn't say we would have

2,000,000 soldiers in France this year. He didn't say we would have 1,500,000 soldiers in France this year. He didn't say we would have 1,000,000 soldiers in France this year. What he did say was this: "We will have more than a half million men in France early in 1918."

And at that the Secretary is taking a considerable chance. It would be interesting to check the figures up on July 1. If, in order to make a record, he does send enough more soldiers to make up half a million, he will run the risk of embarrassing the British and French, who are dependent on us for supplies. And if he gets half a million American soldiers into France during the first half of the year, it will be most interesting to watch what happens the second half.

As soon as you get half a million soldiers into France at our present

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speed of operation, and considering the bulky nature of some of the things we must send, like airplanes, you have permanently mortgaged three million tons of shipping to keep them supplied. But the public, which glances at the headlines and doesn't read the testimony, thinks we are going to have a million and a half or two million soldiers in France this year. Thus another brick is laid in the structure of complacency which the American people have been building up. That brick will be used to hurl at somebody a few months later on, when the structure comes tumbling down.

Of course, the careless and hasty headline writer is to blame. But there is an additional explanation. I think Secretary Baker is a little to blame. Rather, I should say he is partially responsible—but not so much

to blame. There is something about this subject of shipping, a psychological quality which lends itself to equivocal construction. Everybody in official Washington is that way when talking for publication about ships and submarines. And so this false sense of security about the submarine has grown up.

I think the explanation is this: the official custodian of the facts about the submarine is England. The few people in Washington who have the figures at all have them as an official secret from the British Admiralty. For purposes of its own that may be good or not, official England has chosen to be cryptic about the facts. And official Washington feels under an obligation to respect England's wishes, whether it thinks secrecy good judgment or not—and so, whenever a

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Washington official touches the subject of ships and submarines at all, he does it with an air of pussy-footing which leads the public to a false impression of security.

XIII

FOR over a year, ever since the “unrestricted” form of submarine warfare began, the proportion has been steadily and continuously more than two to one in favour of the submarine. During all that time we have lived through a rapidly accelerating diminution of ships. And yet, during all that time we have seen nothing in the newspapers in the nature of warning. Nor have we received any warning from public men, except one that came from former Chairman Denman of the Shipping Board in May, 1917, and which though repeated in June and July, went unheeded.

Uniformly, the headlines in the newspapers have sounded optimistic,

as if the submarine were a peril that had passed, as if, somehow, we had eluded it, and that the laugh was on the Germans. Minor aspects of the situation would be picked out and exploited, like this: "U. S. Adds More Tonnage Than Submarine Sinks." Now that headline was quite true, so far as it went. The United States, by taking over the German and Austrian ships, did add more to American tonnage than the submarine sunk—*of American tonnage*. For there was very little American tonnage for the submarine to sink. The fact disclosed in this particular piece of news meant nothing as respects the submarine situation as a whole. But the American reader got the idea that everything was all right.

The pages of this book could be filled with headlines from American newspapers during the past year, all

giving an optimistic slant to the news about the submarine. Whenever a week came in which the submarine sunk one or two ships less than the previous week, the newspapers proclaimed "Submarine Effectiveness Failing." Whenever some enthusiast thought he had invented a non-sinkable ship, the newspapers told the story at length and on the first page. But when the naval experts got around to laughing the invention out of court, the newspapers made nothing of that news.

It was not deliberate deception on the part of the newspapers and the headline writers. Partly, they were catering to our national psychology. We like to hear the thing of which we can boast, and we shrink from the facts that bring duty and sacrifice before our eyes.

In some cases the writers were as

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much misled as the rest of us. It wasn't their business to get all the facts about the submarine together and find out the true direction of events. In the nature of things the headline writer cannot be held to a standard of complete knowledge on all the subjects he deals with. To have all these facts together was the business of the British Admiralty. Indeed, the British Admiralty throughout the year followed a deliberate policy of keeping the facts away from the public. They knew what the facts were, and they knew what the public thought the facts were; and they did nothing about it.

XIV

I HAVE been at some pains to find out what was the motive of the British Admiralty in concealing the facts, and giving out such reports as they did give out in the cryptic form of "ships under 1,600 tons" and "ships over 1,600 tons." The reason I got was this: that the submarine commander never or rarely can know the size of the ship he sinks; his only opportunity to look at her lasts but a few seconds; the consequence is he usually goes home and reports to the German navy that he has sunk a bigger ship than he really has; that later the true facts come out: that this makes friction between the submarine crews and the navy officials in Berlin; and that all

this helps to break down German morale. That is the reasoning as given to me. It sounds pretty tenuous and far-fetched. Possibly the British Admiralty did not realize how seriously the American reader, who knows so much less of shipping than the English reader, would misconstrue the phrase "over 1,600 tons." To every shipping man, the phrase meant an average of over 5,000 tons. But shipping men are very rare in America. If the information had come to us in terms of 5,000 tons, the delusion would not have lasted so long. The loss of a ship of 5,000 tons might have impressed us for what it is, a very serious matter. A ship of 5,000 tons is a big and complex machine. To build it took, all told, from plates to completion, the work of a thousand men for a period of several months.

Equivocation in a good cause is dan-

gerous business. Equivocation begun for the purpose of deceiving the Germans led to some things which have been unpleasantly close to equivocation for the sake of deceiving Englishmen and Americans. The British Admiralty several times picked out minor and immaterial aspects of the whole case, and told the public and parliament, in terms of the graphic charts on which statistics are kept, that "the curves are satisfactory." As a matter of fact, there is only one graphic chart that shows the true net of the situation.

Submarine sinkings may rise or fall in comparison with previous months; the destruction of submarines by destroyers may rise; but the only true net is this: *the comparison of submarine sinkings with new construction*, i.e., the state of the whole volume of shipping afloat in the Allied and neu-

tral world—Is it holding its own? Is it being increased or decreased?

A graphic method of showing that for the first year of “unrestricted” submarine warfare would look like this:

Tonnage sunk by submarines
New tonnage built

Sir Eric Geddes, on the anniversary of the German policy of unrestricted sinking, February 1, gave out a statement which included this sentence: “The submarine is held.” Naturally that phrase of cryptic optimism was the one which found its way into the headlines. Now, if Sir Eric meant that statement in the narrow sense, that the submarine is not sinking more ships per week, or per month, than formerly, he may possibly get away with it. But if he meant it in the sense that the American public took it, he cannot defend it. The natural mean-

ing of that sentence is that the amount of shipping afloat is not being reduced. And in that sense the statement is fatally incorrect.

Another of the optimistic statements given out by the newspapers on February 1, contained the assertion that Great Britain built last year 2,850,000 tons. That statement contains about 150 per cent. of inaccuracy. The true amount of tonnage built by Great Britain in 1917 was 1,163,474—a figure ominously below her normal output of new tonnage. And it is the *output of new tonnage in its relation to submarine sinkings*—the two taken together—that really shows the true condition.

Under pressure of widespread questioning, late in March of the present year, the British authorities gave out some of the figures which they had previously kept secret. But again, as

always, they put out their statement in such a form and accompanied by such an atmosphere of optimistic inference, as was likely to leave the public undisturbed. The figures, so far as they went, were complete and detailed, and that fact too was calculated to give the public a false sense of assurance. But, complete and detailed as the figures were, their arrangement was misleading. The public do not analyse the figures for themselves; neither, unhappily, do the writers of the newspaper headlines. Both the public and the headline writers deal in phrases and impressions, and so again we have the chorus of "Submarine Situation Improves."

The British Admiralty went back to the beginning of the war in August, 1914, and gave the total submarine destruction since that date; then they gave the total of new ship construction

since that date. Then they compared the two, and the comparison did not look so bad—11,827,572 tons sunk against 6,606,275 new tons built.

But what the public do not realize, and what the British Admiralty realize but avoid pointing out, is this: these totals include thirty months when the submarine was working “restricted,” working, that is to say, at only about one-third of its capacity; and only eleven months when the submarine was operating “unrestricted.” This arrangement of figures looks plausible enough; but in truth no better arrangement could be invented from which to derive misleading totals, misleading averages, and to acquire a most dangerously misleading impression that, while the submarine is pretty serious, it is not ultimately terrifying.

The true time to begin with the fig-

ures is February 1, 1917, the date when the submarine began to operate "unrestricted." We are not able to begin there because the British Admiralty did not give the figures by months, but merely by quarters. But take the figures as they are given to us; give the Admiralty the benefit of a "restricted" month, and begin with January 1, 1917. Here are the results for the year 1917:

Number of new tons built . . .	2,703,355
Number of tons sunk by submarine	6,623,623

There you have the true situation. As a matter of fact, it is somewhat worse than this, for these figures, as has been said, include one month when the submarine was operating "restricted," at about one-third of its capacity. The fact is that during the year 1917, when the submarine was

working at full capacity—working the way in which we are fairly entitled to make deductions (because that is the way it is going to be working until the war ends)—during that period the submarine sank two and a half tons to every one ton built.

To such a relation between sinkings and new building there can be only one end, and that end will be a tragic one for us unless the relation is changed. And, on the day when this is written, April 1, 1918, the relation has not materially changed. So far as it has changed at all, it has changed for the worse, because England and the United States have both been falling down tragically in the work of new construction.

XV

IT is given out from various authorities that we are doing better in the way of beating off the submarine. And we are. There can be no criticism of the activities of our Navy Department and the British navy, in the way of protection. The gallantry and ingenuity of both navies in hunting the submarine down form one of the most cheering chapters of the war. It is not any magic new device that is capturing or checking the submarine. There isn't any magic device, although the newspapers have occasionally printed cryptic news which may well have led a part of the public to suppose a specific remedy for the submarine has been invented. No, it is

only the use of all the old devices to the highest degree of effectiveness. And particularly, it is energy and courage on the part of the officers and crews.

The only tested way to meet the submarine is the way that enemies and danger have always been met, if met successfully—by hunting it, by searching it out and chasing it up and down the ocean. It is being met not so much by any easy, patented protection, as by aggressive pursuit of it.

And yet withal, the final, solemn unescapable fact is that the submarine today, with our navy and the British navy both pursuing it, is doing just about as much damage to the Allies, all the factors considered, as it did more than a year ago with only the British navy opposing it. The thing we lose sight of is that, while our defensive improves, the submarine of-

fensive improves too, and at a rate that, for practical purposes, all factors considered, is step by step with our defence.

When we talk about the real offset to the submarine, the building of new ships, there is no answer to it except a humiliating searching of hearts. Barring the warnings which were issued during the early days of the war, by former Chairman Denman of the Shipping Board, the Government has fed to us and to itself the most fatal kind of optimism.

One who has been on the ground, who has studied the conditions, and who has no motive to feed the people with false incentives to hope, is able to say that we are falling down on the estimates that have been given as necessary to meet the need. The fixed fact of history is that during 1917, and right up to the present, we—

meaning by "we" not merely the United States but all the Allies, and all the neutrals as well—we have been building less than half as many ships as the submarine has been destroying. As a matter of history, this opulent United States, with all its facilities and resources, during the month of January, 1918, built only 52,000 gross tons. And England built only a little more, about 58,000 tons. And that is all that was built. (The building of ships in other Allied and neutral countries has become negligible.) Of the destruction by submarines during that month, the figures have not been given out; but if it was an average month, the submarine sunk just about five times as many tons as were built.

XVI

MOST of our talk has been of our “program.” “Program” is a word of the future and is tolerant of loose talk. It is in the world of hope, luck and blue sky. The President several months ago spoke of “the 6,000,000 tons we will build in 1918.” We shall not build them. The Chairman of the Shipping Board, Mr. Hurley, has spoken of 4,000,000 or 5,000,000. We shall not build them. We shall not build more than 3,000,000 tons. And 3,000,000 tons is not enough to avert calamity.

What we are doing, primarily, is not building ships, but getting ready to build ships. Mr. Hurley knows this, and is sensible enough to say so. Be-

fore the Senate Committee he testified: "The work thus far has been in many cases preparatory, and has carried with it the usual amount of annoyances and disappointments."

We are engaged in an effort to increase, within a year, our ship-building capacity between 1,200 and 1,500 per cent. That is an immense task, and confusion has attended it. We are not a shipping nation any more than we are a military nation, and we are going through the awkward stumblings of learning at one and the same time to fight on land and swim on water. But although we are not a shipping nation we are decidedly supposed to be a business nation. And it is in the field of business that we have fallen down. Our vital mistakes have occurred not in aquatics but in the field of business organization. Mr. Hurley recited one in his testi-

mony before the investigating committee of the Senate:

"We sent two tourist sleeping cars loaded with men for Western ship-yards a short while ago, and we were asked to give them priority to get them out there. And then the Eastern ship-yards went out there and employed riveters away from those very yards on the Pacific Coast. . . . The new ship-yards starting in different localities impaired the efficiency of the old-established yards, because they went out and hired men away from each other. The new yard would give a bonus to a man to get him to work for them, and take him away from the other yard."

That is to say, men who are building ships have been hired away to build yards in which to get ready to build ships.

Now that sort of blundering has nothing to do with aquatics. No

amount of knowledge of shipping, or experience in it, would have taught us how to avoid that particular kind of inefficiency. The qualities of organization that apply to all big business are the ones that have been missing in that kind of mistake. One begins to be dubious about the "business efficiency" America has boasted about.

Another of the causes of our woeful delay in getting down to business in ship-building was described by Mr. Homer Ferguson, President of the Newport News Shipbuilding Company, one of the big companies relied upon to construct the larger items in our program. Newport News, at the time we went to war, was a comfortable little city of 30,000. A year later it had 60,000 people, with all the indescribable confusion of new streets, new sewers, and new houses that results

when a town more than doubles its population in a few months. Was the increase in population due to an increase in ship-building capacity? If it were, there would be comfort in the confusion. It was not. The primary cause of this boom was the action of the War Department in creating, alongside this little city devoted to shipbuilding, a new army encampment, with all its demands on labour and housing. "Our situation was rendered ridiculous," said Mr. Ferguson to the Senate Committee, "by this action of the War Department. . . . I have information this morning that they could not get any water in the shipyard. The army has 15,000 horses there, all using water, and we have 20,000 soldiers there using water.

"We have the Navy Department work, which we are directed to expe-

dite in every possible way, and we have the Shipping Board work, which we are directed to expedite as much as possible; and in the same week I have instructions from either one of the Government departments to give their work priority, and in the meantime the very people we are trying to serve are absorbing the facilities we must have for our people in order to do this work. . . . I took this matter up with the Secretary of War, and wrote him a letter, and discussed it with everybody in Washington I could discuss it with, and the Secretary is investigating and, I understand, proposes to put up some temporary quarters for the soldiers and the regular officers.”

When this was stated to the committee Senator Johnson said: “That indicates lack of management and utter lack of co-operation?” and Mr.

Ferguson replied: "It is due to the fact that the people have the power to arbitrarily give orders without knowing the consequences of the orders they give."

Senator Johnson added: "And without knowing who else gives orders?"

"Yes, Sir," replied Mr. Ferguson.

Here with all the map of the United States to choose from, the War Department selected, as the place to build a cantonment (with all its demands on local labour and housing), a small city which was already relied upon by the navy and the Shipping Board to expand to double its size in taking care of the requirements of those two departments.

The answer, of course, is that these three departments had never been brought together. There was no central planning and co-ordination—no

“top-planning.” It has not been inexperience in ship-building that has caused the worst blunders. It has been a lack of those qualities of business administration in which America has so long boasted her pre-eminence.

XVII

I HAVE dwelt upon the necessity for more tonnage. And by more tonnage, I mean new tonnage, tonnage acquired through work.

To a certain extent the responsible officials have been deluding themselves and the public by a process of beating the devil around the stump. When Secretary Baker was asked by the Senate Investigating Committee how he would be able to send to France so large a number of troops as he had said he would send, he disclosed the fact that among other devices he hoped to be able to get some ships from the Japanese. And it was a fact that negotiations with the Japanese were under way at that time. But im-

mediately thereafter there arose the crisis which made it necessary for the Japanese to consider their own problem of possibly taking an army of their own to Siberia. Finally, when the negotiations came to an end, all that Japan gave us was 250,000 tons, about a two-weeks meal for the submarine. So long as you rely on makeshifts of this kind, the accidents are apt to run counter to your hopes.

The Dutch ships have been taken over; but the Dutch ships were just as available for most of the Allied service when they were neutral as when they are under United States registry. Much has been made of the taking over of the German and Austrian interned ships. But all this is mere expedient. It provides no new resource. It is the sort of thing a man does when bankruptcy threatens him; he digs up little stores from here and there. But

the only thing that can surely save him is a new source of revenue. And the thing that we must have is a continuously flowing reservoir of new tonnage, with a flow which must be at least as great as the rate of submarine destruction, and ought to be very much greater.

There is nothing for it but new ships from new ship-yards. There is nothing for it but work.

XVIII

THE problem is primarily one of new ships. But it is also one of ships *plus speed of operation*. For if a ship is consuming sixty days for each round-trip, and you cut that down to thirty, you have, in effect, double the quantity of available tonnage.

The director of operations for the United States Shipping Board is Mr. Edward F. Carry. As he was testifying before the Senate Investigating Committee, Senator Bankhead asked him this question:

“How many days are required to make the round trip from New York and back?”

Mr. Carry—“Under normal conditions you mean?”

Senator Bankhead—"Yes."

Mr. Carry—"They ought to make a round trip in three weeks. Now that the congestion is so great, it takes from fifty to sixty days to make a round trip."

That point, so grim in its significance, passed unnoticed by the senatorial investigators. Consider this: with this speed of operation, it takes about one ton of shipping one year to carry one soldier to Europe. That, if you reflect upon it, is appalling. Some of the facts that make it appalling are unescapable and must be faced. The rest arise from intolerable inefficiency.

One of the seized German ships now used in carrying our soldiers to France, has a tonnage of about 20,000. With this capacity she carries about 3,500 soldiers per trip. To carry as many soldiers as her tonnage, 20,000,

she must make six trips. Under present conditions she is making at the rate of just six trips a year. She consumes sixty days for each round trip. She ought to make it in less than thirty days. When she was operated by her German captain and his Hamburg-American crew she used to make the round trip in three weeks. The difference between sixty days and twenty-one days is not wholly accounted for by war. The submarine is not responsible for all of that.

To be sure, a fast passenger ship cannot go at top speed because she must keep step with her convoy. But that only accounts for a few days. The difference between sixty days and thirty days is the difference between Hamburg-American management and unhyphenated American management. It is the difference between German efficiency and—where did we hear that

phrase before—American efficiency. As a Washington official said in the safety of private conversation: “The great American bluff is being called, and the show-down isn’t pretty to look at. We are turning out to be two-spots; and in a show-down two-spots are valuable only when found in a rigidly limited order and arrangement.”

We used to laugh a good deal at Russia about the congestion at Archangel. Returning travellers and the newspapers used to tell us about the acres and acres of supplies piled up on the docks, and for miles back of the docks, both at Archangel and Vladivostok, without adequate transportation facilities to get them to the front, where they were needed. We used to say, with kindly tolerance, that Russia wasn’t a grown-up nation, that she hadn’t developed the genius for or-

ganization. Well, within a few months that Russian situation is going to be duplicated in the United States. We are making guns, rifles, shells, airplanes, and other supplies many times as fast as we can possibly transport them to the only point where they are of any use. Mr. Hurley says there are munitions now in the United States, already manufactured, which will not reach France for two years, because of the lack of ships.

Everything comes back to ships. This nation is manufacturing munitions at the rate of five times the carrying capacity of our shipping. We are turning out some millions of tons of goods which are of use only at one spot on the earth's surface, the battle front in France. And we have not got, because we did not plan and coordinate, one-fifth the amount of shipping necessary to carry those muni-

tions to the spot where they must go. It is as if we had built a huge factory with only a two-by-five door out of which to move the finished product and with only a narrow-gauge railroad and a donkey engine to get it to market.

The result is going to be worse than you will realize unless you reflect upon it. The stuff is going to pile up on our docks, and back up on our switches, and congest our railroads to the point of paralysis, and our great war machine will have to slow down before it has fairly got under way. The consequences, economic and military, are going to be extremely serious. And they will be on us in only a few weeks.

It is just a year ago the sixth of next month that we began to manufacture shells and guns. And it is only

today that we are trying frantically to get the men to build the yards to build the ships to carry these shells and guns to France.

XIX

EVERYTHING comes back to this one word—ships. The recent order of President Wilson and Mr. Hoover, enforcing a reduced consumption of wheat, was called a food order. In reality it had to do, not with a scarcity of food, but with the scarcity of ships. The wheat is there—millions of bushels of it, but there are no ships to carry it. Thereby hangs one of the most picturesque incidents of the war.

Three years ago the Australian Government bought and contracted for all the wheat crop of that country. Then it bought some twenty-one ships to carry the wheat to Europe. But the submarine has had its way with those

ships, and today not more than four or five of them are left. Meantime the wheat has been piling up along the Australian docks and railroads. They put some of it in sacks, made walls of the sacked wheat, and poured the rest within the walls.

Along the railroads in the interior of Australia there were great bins of wheat ten or twenty feet high and wide, and more than ten miles long. Soon mice appeared.. They began to gnaw through the bags, and the hempen walls collapsed. Under such favourable conditions, the mice multiplied until they became a plague. The Government put its shoulder to the perfectly serious business of fighting mice. It had special ways of catching them, and crews of men with specially constructed incinerators. Night after night they burned five to ten tons of mice in a single night.

But the mice continued to increase. On the soil of Australia, for a few days, man's age-long contest with the forces of nature became an acute pitched battle. Man won a respite only when some mysterious law of nature brought a plague upon the mice, a disease described as a sort of soft ringworm. Then the mice, fleeing from the infection, deserted the wheat piles and ravaged the fields, so that the new crop of Australian wheat is only a fraction of what normally it ought to be.

Meantime, men who had been trying to salvage the piled-up wheat were infected by the disease whose germs had been left in the wheat by the departing mice. From the workmen the infection spread to their families and neighbors. That is the story as given to me by an Australian official. It ought to be tempting to some writer

who has the talent to do it justice and the leisure to get more of the details. There in Australia—about as far away from the battle fields as you can get and remain on this earth—is a sort of huge cancer, a direct result of the war—more specifically a direct result of the famine in ships, a direct result of the submarine.

XX

THE war is 3000 miles away from us. You can tell the nature of a man by the way he speaks of this 3000 miles. To the timid it gives an agreeable sense of security. To the half-hearted, it is a source of satisfaction. To those who hope there will be a negotiated peace, or that the war will be ended somehow without our making any serious sacrifice, this 3000 miles is an advantage. But to the brave this distance is not a safeguard; it is a difficulty. If we really want to fight, if we wish to be in the war, if we want to come to grips with the enemy, then this three thousand miles is our greatest handicap.

If there were such a thing as calling for a miracle and getting it, if an omnipotent being should do the one thing that would help us most toward throwing all our strength against Germany, the thing he would do would be this: He would pick up this continent of ours and set it down along side France, New York touching Havre, Savannah touching Bordeaux. Picture how that would change the face of the war. But there is no answer to a prayer except it starts from our own hearts; and the only miracle that springs to our help in time of desperate need is the miracle of our own capacity when necessity makes us dip the bucket to the very bottom of the resources within ourselves. Nevertheless the truth is this particular miracle can be approximated. We can put across the Atlantic Ocean what in effect would be a bridge join-

ing us to France. We can, if we go to the highest of our energies and the deepest of our resources, build ships so many, so fast and so co-ordinated that soldiers and supplies can go on to the battle-front as expeditiously as if the two continents were touching. But we can only achieve this by the uttermost effort of our capacities.

William James has an allusion to the familiar phenomenon called "second-wind," that higher and quicker functioning of lungs and heart and spirit which comes to us only after we have exhausted what is our ordinary best. Ordinarily we pass into second-wind only when there is the stimulus of some terrible need, when we are pursued by a devil of desperation. But James' essay makes the point that in place of a devil of desperation, we can substitute our own will-power, if we have the will-power; that all of us,

if our wills were strong enough and well-disciplined enough could go through life or second-wind all the time. The occasional man who does this becomes, in the eyes of the indolent rest of us, a sort of super-man. But all of us can do it. If this crisis of shipping could be made vivid enough to us, we would see in it just such a devil of menace as would stimulate us to our second-wind.

Some one of our ancestors who invented the metaphors which still form the bulk of our figures of speech, spoke of "the crack of doom," hence we all think of doom as something that comes with a crash, something that startles us and is easily recognizable. The truth is that only occasionally does doom come in that way. It generally comes gradually, furtively, by the slow, unnoticed disintegration of one prop after another.

It is only the completed thing, the accumulated product that makes a noise. It is hardly of the nature of doom to announce itself with trumpets. It is part of the devilishness of most forms of doom that they creep upon us.

I wonder would this situation reach our hearts if we should send couriers through the country like Paul Revere, calling out "two to one; two to one"; if we should have the police in the cities warn each home just as he would give warning of fire or of flood; if we should adopt a code for all our bells and whistles and gongs, and sound them as we do when fire threatens. The menace is not less great, only the nature of it is such that it appears distant, furtive and scattered.

Mr. Edward A. Filene, an official of the United States Chamber of Commerce, is a citizen who has grasped

this situation, and is doing what he can to make others see it. He travels about the country, calling meetings of citizens, and pointing out that this business of shipbuilding is a work not merely for the men who handle rivets and swing sledges and receive wages from the ship-yard, that it is the concern of everybody, and that everybody can find a way to help.

One of his suggestions has appealed to me especially because it is a means of bringing average citizens into direct and vital participation in the work. He points out that in many cases, the sudden expansion of shipbuilding activity near a city, and the congestion of labour on the waterfront, has more or less paralysed the ordinary street-car facilities which carry workmen from their homes to the shipyard; and he suggests that the private owners of automobiles take

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to themselves the task of carrying the men to and from their work.

I like this because it provides a way for the maximum number of people to volunteer. It is of the nature of the things we do in an emergency, and what is needed is that we should all recognize that it is an emergency, just as much an emergency as if a fire were sweeping the town.

We should do our best, and we are not doing our best. At the end of a year of war we have a hundred and fifty thousand men building ships. We ought to have a million. We should build ships and ships and ships. And then we should build faster ships. And after that we should build more ships. We should build steel ships and wooden ships and concrete ships and composite ships. We should build anything that will float. If it is not adapted to de-

fence against the submarine, we can use it to bring manganese from Brazil for our guns and rubber from Ceylon for our military trucks.

Not only must we maintain that line of ships between ourselves and our little newborn army. There is another need just as essential. Endowed as this country is for the manufacture of munitions, there are a few essential elements which we have not got, or have in insufficient quantity; we are compelled to bring these across water. Among them are manganese and rubber and chrome and nitrates and hemp. We cannot have too many ships. There is no such thing as too many ships. If a Cajun fisherman in the swamps of Louisiana can hollow out a log big enough to float a bale of sisal hemp across from Yucatan by all means urge him to do it.

In San Francisco, two business men, who had no more responsibility for the situation than the general responsibility of all of us, and who had no experience in ship-building, have made possible an experiment in ships built of concrete. They ventured the very large sum of money required, and hired a house architect to make the experiment. At the time this book is written, the tests are not yet complete, for while the structure is afloat it has not yet been tried with the engines at work in it. If the experiment is successful, it will be an important achievement, for it adds a new and easily procured material to the limited number out of which ships can be built. But apart from all that, the spirit of the group who made the experiment is the important thing. That is the kind of spirit that will master the emergency.

There is a way in which all can help. It must be accepted, that any one who can help will want to help, for such a belief rests upon our faith in human nature. Every one can help by saving the last available bit of man-power for the building of ships. We have a given quantity of man-power in the country. It cannot be increased or stimulated. Famine in it cannot be escaped, and all other famines and scarcities go back to this one famine.

Upon the reserves of man-power war has already made enormous demands. To consider but one example, the aviation department of our army, when we entered the war, a year ago, consisted of eleven officers and seventy-five men. Today it consists of over a hundred thousand men. That is an increase of more than ten thousand per cent. The increases in

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other essential military activities are on the same scale, and all these increases must come from the same fixed quantity of man-power.

Under these circumstances the thing that any thoughtful, patriotic person must do is to avoid the use of any man-power that he can possibly get along without. Such a determination will express itself chiefly in refusal to use luxuries. Some of our luxuries come from abroad. In coming from abroad they consume ship space which otherwise could be carrying wheat and bullets to France. And the rest of our luxuries, made in this country, consume man-power which otherwise could be building ships.

During the Napoleonic wars, there was a fine old Scotch Presbyterian preacher who, from his pulpit in Edinburgh used to pour forth the

stores of his eloquence in order that he might keep his people in fortitude and right faiths of living during that twenty-six years' strain of contest against autocracy. Once Thomas Chalmers said: "If I were a statesman I should not hesitate to deprive my countrymen of the last of their luxuries, so long as the first of their liberties were in danger."

THE END

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